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Notes of the Month.

The forthcoming celebrations to mark the tercentenary of the corporate existence of Belfast will be of interest not only to its own inhabitants, but also to people generally in the North of Ireland. Within the period of three centuries there have naturally been many changes, but one thing which has been consistent and impressive is the steady growth in importance and commercial prosperity. The great increase in population bears witness to a remarkable development which finds few parallels in the United Kingdom. This is apparent to the religious observer in the large number of places of worship. When King William arrived at Belfast in 1690 these were two in number—the old Corporation Church, in High Street, and the Presbyterian Meeting-house, in Rosemary Lane. Now every visitor to the City remarks on the many handsome churches Belfast possesses. That they accomplish all that they might accomplish no one will affirm. We wish for them increased power and usefulness, so that, along with the arts of industry, there may flourish those higher arts which make for the true prosperity of any community.

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The attention of Unitarians and Liberal Christians generally will be arrested by the thought that a hundred years ago the Trinity Act was passed, which removed some of the disabilities under which Unitarians had long suffered. It is fitting that our congregations should be reminded of the priceless privileges they possess as compared with those that obtained prior to the year 1813. Liberty of opinion, the right of private judgment—these were religious rights which our spiritual fathers desired and earnestly sought after, but which found no recognition in English law through long, trying years. When at last the Unitarians' reasonable plea was granted, it became possible for others to enter into their success and profit by their strenuous service. All honour to their glorious memory!

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The annual sermons and meeting of the Ulster Unitarian Christian Association, which will be held on April 13th and 14th respectively, will give our readers an opportunity of hearing

Dr. Tudor Jones, of London, one of our most prominent English divines. As the translator and interpreter of Professor Euchen, his name is known to many outside our own religious community, and doubtless outsiders will be amongst his hearers this month in Belfast. He is also coming as the representative of the Sunday School Association to hold a conference, for teachers and others interested in Sunday School work, in the Central Hall, on Tuesday evening, April 15th.

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It cannot be said that Dr. Charles Eliot, ex-President of Harvard University, U.S.A., is a Unitarian prophet without honour in his own country. It is not very long ago that efforts were made to induce him to become Ambassador in England. A further attempt was recently made, at the instigation of the new President, to persuade him to go to London as the United States Ambassador. Although Dr. Eliot again declined the honour, the invitation to assume it is proof positive that his character and attainments have gained for him the respect and recognition of his fellow-countrymen.

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS.

By Rev. D. J. Williams.

And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.—Matt. vii. 28, 29.

THE astonishment of the people was due to the fact that there was a teacher who seemed to teach with authority, and yet, emphatically, he did not teach as their scribes. It was a new experience introduced into their midst. They were face to face with the fact of having listened with gratitude and profit to one who could expound weighty matters of the law who himself did not belong to the professional class which usually had the monopoly of such a task. They were further impressed in that he carried weight and authority, though they could describe his prestige only by way of a negation. They were emphatic that he spoke with authority. There was a charm and originality about him which gave them new ideas and new values of life. The experience was exhilarating.

It was so unexpected, such a thorough change, that they described it after the manner in which it struck them most. He did not teach as their scribes; yet the surprising and delightful thing about it was that he spoke as one having the highest authority.

Thus far at this time could the astonished people go. If we think a moment we can readily enter into their point of view. They were probably drawn to Jesus, first and foremost, because of the naturalness and unostentatiousness with which he taught. There was nothing laboured, no display of professional dignity, no assumption of acquired sanctity on account of office and position; no desire to draw a distinctive line between himself and the men he taught, no claim to exclusive knowledge hid from the vulgar mind, no reliance on professional knowledge to overawe the free enquiring mind, no professional appeal to past authority to overlay the present. He did not magnify the sanctity of the past in order to distrust the aspirations of the present. With him the life of men then living was not subordinate to the authority of dead ages to which obedience was due against men's better judgment. Indeed, he did not appeal to the past at all, except by way of illustration and encouragement. The scribes were prone to all this, and "laid heavy burdens on men's shoulders, which were grievous to be borne, but they themselves touched them not with one of their fingers." The burden of the law was very heavy. It was difficult, well-nigh impossible, to observe it as the scribes taught it. So these people found that Jesus, unlike their scribes, had authority. Instead of saying "thus saith the law, thus say the fathers," as the scribes did, Jesus relied on his own authority, and startled the crowd with his "I say unto you" set over against the fathers and the law. This was indeed the measure of the people's

recognition of Jesus in a very special sense from their point of view as a new teacher.

When Jesus began his public ministry, it may be said with truth that the scribes, who on other counts were a worthy class of men, were responsible for teaching the paralysing doctrine (in Emerson's words) " that inspiration is past, that the Bible is closed." They did not appeal to their own instincts, their own perception of religious truth, but to the law and to the fathers. As Dr. Carpenter has truly said, " They were mere parrots, repeating a parrot cry. So true was this that the best parrot was the best scribe." Jesus revolted from this numbing doctrine, and expounded the law, not by appeal to dead opinion, but to his own authority. " I say unto you " became the landmark whereby Jesus emancipated his fellow-countrymen from a slavish habit of looking to dead men for guidance.

Thus it is true what the people said of Jesus: " he taught as one having authority." He made no appeal to others, but enunciated new values, transforming the old ones, and compelling men to see truth in a newer and more glorious light. But the contemporaries of Jesus were not the only ones who have been astonished at his teaching. It may be said with much truth that the generations, one after another, ever since his time, have been astonished. Beginning with his own disciples, men have felt that wonder and astonishment which his teaching is eminently calculated to inspire. They have been attracted while they have been sceptical of certain doctrines which seemed hard, extreme, impracticable, or evidences of an unbalanced mind. Each one of these epithets has been applied to different aspects of the Master's expositions of the things of life. Even to this day men who profess, call themselves, and are known as Christians are sceptical of the practicability of the most salient features of the Sermon on the Mount. So many of his followers gloss over what they admit to be characteristic sayings, explain away their adaptability to the conditions of modern life, assert that they are ideals to strive after rather than precepts to be literally fulfilled by the professing Christian. Men thus exercised about Christian precepts are not adversaries of the faith, but anxious disciples, who are perplexed by the difference between the calls of spiritual Christianity and the ruling ideas obtaining in the modern world. So grave a feature is this that the bulk of the people are sceptical of the genuineness of the profession of so-called Christians who obviously are not seriously disturbed by a failure to live up to the Christian standard of ethics. This disparity between faith and practice is an ever-present reminder that Jesus remains at the same time the wonder and the despair of men.

In this way the authority of Jesus remains a potent fact in modern life. Just as of old, so to-day he encourages, attracts, calls forth surprising loyalty and examples of devoted love; or, on account of the hardness of his way, repels, inspires revolt and unfaithfulness. In whatever light he is regarded, he is a supreme fact of modern life, and men cannot get away from him at all. It means that he is a personality still to be reckoned with; that his ideals inspire unstinted devotion, or else despair in men's hearts. And this is as much as to say whichever way we look at life—whether in the spirit of cheerful faith, or in that of a bewildered outlook—Jesus is there to encourage with his well-done, or else in divine pity endeavours still to bring light to tired minds, and relief to overburdened hearts.

And so it is that the authority of Jesus is a live fact to-day. Men cannot get away from him, for he is not to be put aside. He is the personified epitome of true and dignified manhood. His name renders sacred not only the identity of the devout disciples, but also quite as truly the troubled life of him who lives in darkness or in sin.

No troubled or tempestuous life, no dreary wight despised and ignored of his fellow-men can ever again be of no account just precisely because Jesus once for all threw his mantle over

all men, and recognised the unworthy and least among them as his brethren.

Thus the grandeur of that life once lived in Palestine, so pure and mild, has for ever redeemed the lives of men from utter baseness. Man will never more be looked at as a mere slave, born to misery. He will be reverenced, not altogether because of the awful mystery which surrounds him, and hems him in, but more truly because of the latent possibilities which are in him, and the promise of the high and noble destiny which are open to him.

The authority of Jesus has in fact established man as the son of God. More and more humanitarian activities are rendering his life more secure and virtuous. The time will come when Jesus' faith in man will be redeemed, and his life rendered inviolable. So will come to pass some day the golden age for men: "Weeping and travail may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning."

PIONEERS OF LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY.

By Rev. G. L. Phelps.

III. Ralph Waldo Emerson. (1803-1882).

THE influence of Emerson on the Liberal Christianity of to-day is even more manifest than that of Channing or Parker. Like them he began his work in the Christian ministry, but he felt he could not administer the Lord's Supper in the accustomed form, and resigned after a ministry of three years. Henceforth he was a lecturer and essayist. In the year of his resignation he wrote in his journal, "I have sometimes thought that in order to be a good minister it was necessary to leave the ministry. The profession is antiquated. In an altered age we worship in the dead forms of our forefathers." Emerson made no attempt to pour new wine into old wineskins; he did not use the hackneyed phrases of theologians; he was no controversialist. He once wrote to a friend: "I delight in telling what I think, but if you ask me how I dare say so, or why it is so, I am the most helpless of mortal men."

Emerson's complaint against the religion of his day was that it was conventional. "The foregoing generations beheld God and Nature face to face; we, through their eyes. Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the Universe?" The protest he made against the literary fashions which checked the originality of the writers of his day was applied also to religion. "Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon have given; forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men libraries when they wrote these books. . . We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe. . . . We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds."

We are not surprised then at his teaching of the Over-Soul. "The Supreme critic on the errors of the past and the present, and the only prophet of that which must be, is that great nature in which we rest, as the earth lies in the soft arms of the atmosphere; that Unity, that Over-Soul, within which every man's particular being is contained, and made one with all other; that common heart, of which all sincere conversation is the worship, to which all right action is submission. . . . And this deep power in which we exist, and whose beatitude is all accessible to us, is not only self-sufficing and perfect in every hour, but the act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object, are one. . . . We lie open on one side of the deeps of spiritual nature to the attributes of God." "The intuition of the moral sentiment is an insight of the perfection of the laws of the soul. . . All things proceed out of the same spirit, and all things conspire with it. Whilst a man seeks good ends, he is strong by the whole strength of nature." This brings us to the heart of Emerson's great contribution to Liberal Chris-

tianity, here we have the very essence of non-subscription—"Meantime, whilst the doors of the temple stand open, night and day, before every man, and the oracles of this truth cease never, it is guarded by one stern condition; this, namely, it is an intuition. It cannot be received at second hand. Truly speaking, it is not instruction, but provocation, that I can receive from another soul. What he announces, I must find true in me, or reject; and on his word, or as his second, be he who he may, I can accept nothing." Grasp this thoroughly, and we find that it involves more than a declaration of religious liberty—it involves a heightened conception of human nature. "Jesus Christ belonged to the true race of prophets. He saw with open eye the mystery of the soul. Drawn by its severe harmony, ravished with its beauty, he lived in it, and had his being there. Alone in all history, he estimated the greatness of man. One man was true to what is in you and me. He saw that God incarnates himself in man, and evermore goes forth anew to take possession of his world. He said in this jubilee of sublime emotion, 'I am divine; through me God acts; through me speaks. Would you see God, see me; or see thee, when thou also thinkest as I now think.' But what a distortion did his doctrine and memory suffer in the same, in the next, and the following ages! There is no doctrine of the Reason which will bear to be taught by the Understanding. The understanding caught this high chant from the poet's lips, and said in the next age, 'This was Jehovah come down out of heaven. I will kill you if you say he was a man.' . . . The divine bards are the friends of my virtue, of my intellect, of my strength. They admonish me that the gleams which flash across my mind are not mine, but God's; that they had the like, and were not disobedient to the heavenly vision. So I love them. Noble provocations go out from them, inviting me to resist evil, to subdue the world, and to BE. And thus by his holy thoughts Jesus serves us, and thus only. A true conversion, a true Christ, is now, as always, to be made by the reception of beautiful sentiments." "Men have come to speak of the revelation as somewhat long ago given and done, as if God were dead. The injury to faith throttles the preacher, and the goodliest of institutions becomes an uncertain and inarticulate voice. Courage, piety, love, wisdom can teach, and every man can open his door to these angels, and they shall bring him the gift of tongues. But the man who aims to speak as books enable, as synods use, as the fashion guides, and as interest commands, babbles. Let him hush."

Emerson proclaimed the doctrine of self-reliance, but it was ever a self-reliance which realised its responsibilities and insisted on thoroughness and discipline. He honoured Jesus, not with the lips, as those who cry Lord, Lord! but by calling upon men to show the courage of Jesus and live by intuition and faith the life of divine humanity. He preached a gospel of hope and optimism. Emerson has his limitations, and the defects of his qualities, but in an age in which "Things are in the saddle, and ride mankind," in an age of unrest and unbelief, it would be well if we could learn from him to

Heartily know
When half-gods go
The gods arrive.

AN AGNOSTIC'S LETTER.

(The following lines only paraphrase in verse a letter received from a cultured and religious Agnostic, with the author's reply thereto.)

I KNOW not, Friend, where Christ was born;
"The Word" doth no precision give;
"The Faith" for me were less forlorn,
Could I be sure that he did live.

And, oh, much more I long to know,
Not why and wherefore he did die
In Palestine long, long ago,
But is he living now "on high"?

Were I with true assurance blest,
The conflict in my mind might cease,
My heart and mind would be at rest,
And I could live and die in peace.

Think you I love to cherish doubt?
I bear it with an aching heart;
I know 'tis hard to live without
The courage faith and hope impart.

And I could hope, but would it show
The *truth* from all illusion free?
And doubting love can never know
The joy of blissful certainty.

Yet that alone would ease my pain
And all my sad misgivings end;
Of naught He does should I complain,
Were I but sure of God, my Friend.

Oft I recall the days of youth,
Its simple faith and artless thought;
When I believed, as God's own truth,
The fairy tales which I was taught.

But much that good men thought they knew,
Is now to faith a "stumbling block";
And things that seemed revealed and true
Give Christ-like love a grievous [shock.

The love of truth oft leads to doubt,
The "spirit that denies" may bless;
The "*Eternal No*" may be devout,
And false the "*Everlasting Yes.*"

REPLY.

My Friend, I do believe *you* true.
Though this be all your meagre creed:
It must be right the good to do,
Whatever fate may be your meed.

Let that go on, till Christ's great day
Shall break before your unscaled eyes,
And all the "shadows flee away,"
God's morning of "Divine Surprise!"

Warrenpoint. M.

LESSON NOTES FOR TEACHERS.

By Rev. E. H. Pickering, B.A.

SCENES, INCIDENTS, AND LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JESUS.

V. Lessons from the Sermon on the Mount (1). Read Matthew 5. 1-7. *Memory verse,* Matthew 5. 6.

1. *The joyous character of Jesus' teaching.* He wanted everyone to be happy. We think we shall be happy if we have plenty of good things, *e.g.*, toys and games. But there is often quarrelling over these things. To be truly happy we must have good hearts. See the story of King Midas and the Golden Touch (Hawthorne's "Tanglewood Tales"). We must not confuse worldly success with happiness. That was not enough for the rich young man (Mark 10. 17-22). Happiness comes if we are noble, generous, truthful, and pure.

2. *The Beatitudes.* (*a*) *Take the first four together.* Poor in spirit—lowly minded. If we are conceited and obstinate we shall never learn nor make friends. If lowly and gentle we shall learn and be helpful. Hence friends, *i.e.*, the kingdom of Heaven on earth. Darwin, the great scientist, owed his great knowledge to his gentleness and humility. He loved all creatures, great and small. (*b*) *The merciful.* We look to friends and parents to help us, not because we deserve it, but because they love us. Therefore to be fair let us love others and be merciful. (Read Matthew 18. 21-35.) For elder scholars, take Portia's speech on mercy in "The Merchant of Venice": Trial scene.

VI. Lessons from the Sermon on the Mount (2). Read Matthew 5. 8-12. *Memory verse,* Matthew 5. 9.

1. *The Pure in Heart.* We all wish to see God. If a window is dirty we cannot see the scene outside, and even a sunshiny day would look dull. So impure hearts make our eyes too dusty and dirty to see God. We recognise easiest those we are most like—the rest seem strange and foreign. Jesus was a stranger to his foes. Once a wicked man was made judge. He proved himself very clever at recognising the wicked, but he could not perceive the innocent and good. Kindly and gentle deeds make a pure heart, and we shall see God in a world that is beautiful and happy.

2. *The Peace-makers.* Peace is har-

mony. It does not mean doing nothing, but quietly putting everything in its place. Sharp temper and untidiness prevent peace, *e.g.*, the bad-tempered cuckoo chick, which throws all the other little birds out of the nest. War in the home and between nations arises (1) from selfishness. Peace-makers fight against selfishness. All great reformers are peace-makers, *e.g.*, Jesus Christ. (2) From ignorance. We are all God's children, but ignorance makes us think some men are foes because of different colour, country, manners, speech, religion, position, etc. We must have open mind as well as open heart. Peace-makers are sons of God, because they do what God does—make the world happy.

(3) The Persecuted. All saints and martyrs gain the kingdom, because the kingdom consists of faithful hearts. Persecution comes when we resist the temptation of those who are worse than ourselves.

VII. Calling the disciples. Read Mark 1. 16-20, 2. 13-14. *Memory verse,* Mark 1. 17.

Purpose of Lesson. To show the meaning of Christian discipleship and the broad welcome offered to all to become disciples.

1. *Jesus called* those he thought would be useful, no matter their birth and education. (1) *fishermen, e.g.*, Simon Peter and Andrew, (2) *business men*, Levi (Matthew), (3) *preachers*, Simon the Zealot. None too small or too poor. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Again, Tacitus, the Roman historian, called the earliest Christians the basest class of men. Yet see what they did.

2. *Follow me.* Note the great faith of the disciples. Following means more than merely walking after, as in a Sunday School procession. We have to follow Jesus as soldiers follow a leader, to fight with him against sorrow, suffering, and selfishness. Moreover, we must trust whole-heartedly in our cause, which is to bring Heaven on earth.

3. *Fishers of men.* Most of Jesus' disciples and hearers were fisherfolk, and he shows that every occupation has a spiritual as well as a material side. To us here he would, no doubt, have said "builders of sea-worthy souls" or "weavers of souls." By drawing together the threads of goodness in our lives, and the lives of others, we shall weave a beautiful pattern of the *heavenly city*. This is Christian discipleship.

VIII. Jesus as Healer. Read Mark 1. 29-39. *Memory verse,* Mark 1. 34. From this lesson we learn that all true religion is practical.

Do your best to *give a vivid picture* of the three striking scenes. (1) Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law. (2) Then at even all the sick round about are brought to the door. (3) In the early morning Jesus escapes to the mountain to pray.

1. *Jesus' healing power* lay in his sympathy. In his days sick people were not helped much by their friends; especially were weak-minded people shunned as being possessed with devils. Jesus did what a mother would do to her child. He comforted, and they all came confidently to be healed. Care for the sick has always been a leading principle of Christianity, *e.g.*, Father Damien with the lepers; also see what a miracle Florence Nightingale wrought by going with Christian spirit to nurse and tend the wounded soldiers in the Crimea.

2. *It was teaching* rather than healing for which Jesus came. He was a preacher, not a doctor. Neither was the good Samaritan a doctor, but, like Jesus, he let his business go whilst he helped a wounded man. Never be too busy to help. Love for God makes us helpful. Jesus healed men because he was full of this helpful love.

3. *Prayer.* We must, like Jesus, take in the spirit of God before we can put it out: must learn before we can teach: must be strong before we can comfort.

For the Children.

By Rev. J. Worthington, B.A.

GASHMU, THE TELL-TALE.

Gashmu saith it—Neh. vi. 6.

NO person is more heartily disliked than the tell-tale. Nothing is meaner and more cowardly than tale bearing. Gashmu was a tell-tale. Nehemiah and his followers were building the walls of Jerusalem to protect themselves from their enemies. Gashmu said Nehemiah wanted to be king. Nehemiah wanted nothing of the kind. Gashmu knew he didn't. The truth is Gashmu didn't want the walls built, and he thought he could stop the building by circulating false reports about Nehemiah. The tell-tale rarely speaks the truth.

In spite of Gashmu's attempt to make mischief, however, the walls were built, and Nehemiah's purity of aim was clearly seen.

"What is bearing false witness?" a teacher once asked his class. The best answer given was this:—When nobody does nothing to nobody and somebody goes and tells. You may have read about Joseph and his brethren in the Book of Genesis. Joseph, as a youth, was a tell-tale. He thought himself a superior person to his brothers in every way (the tell-tale usually so thinks), and he used to talk to his father about their faults. One day his brothers took hold of him and put him in a pit, where he had time to think about his own faults. It was a cruel thing to do, but it was the best thing that could have happened to Joseph. He was a wiser boy after that.

Most people have faults big enough of their own to attend to without troubling themselves about other people's faults. Take the beam out of your own eye, said Jesus.

The worst of it is that tales once told can never be recalled; stories once circulated can never be withdrawn.

There once lived in Rome in the sixteenth century a famous preacher named Philip Neri. One day a woman came to him to confess. She had, she said, one great fault: she had an incurable habit of talking about her neighbours.

"And do you do it often?" asked the preacher.

"Very often," she replied.

"My child," said the reverend father, "your fault is great, but the grace of God is greater. But go and do this for a penance. Go to the market and buy a chicken, just killed and with the feathers on. Then walk a mile, plucking the feathers as you go along, and then come back to me."

The woman did as she was told, and then came back to Neri. "The first part has been well done," he said. "Now return and gather the feathers you have scattered."

"But," said the woman, "I cannot; the wind has blown them in all directions."

"So is it with your stories," said the preacher; "recall them if you can."

"What a great deal of time and ease a man gains," says an ancient writer, "who lets his neighbour's words, thoughts, and behaviour alone and takes care that his own actions are honest and good."

When we are tempted to repeat stories about another person, let us then ask ourselves two questions. Let us ask first of all, are they true? Then let us ask, is it worth while telling them? Will it do anybody any good?

Again, when we find ourselves in the society of tell-tales, let us remember two simple but important rules. The first is: DON'T LISTEN.

The second is, if you are obliged to listen: DON'T BELIEVE.

Obey these rules and you will increase both your own happiness and the happiness of your friends.

Remember what Dean Swift once wrote: "A tell-tale out of school is of all wits the greatest fool."

BELFAST (STANHOPE STREET) DOMESTIC MISSION.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE Annual Meeting of the Mission was held in the Central Hall, Rosemary Street, on Monday evening, 3rd March. Mr. John M. Andrews, of Comber, presided. and there was an excellent attendance. Among those present were—The Revs. T. Dunkerley, J. A. Kelly, G. J. Slipper, H. J. Rossington, E. S. Hicks, E. H. Pickering, F. Woolley, A. O. Ashworth, and J. Worthington; Messrs. R. Dickson, C. J. M'Kisack, H. Thomas, J. Steele, and E. Gordon.

After Rev. J. A. Kelly had opened the proceedings with prayer, Miss C. Bruce presented the annual report, which showed a very satisfactory state of things, except that there was a falling off of subscriptions. Owing, however, to a generous donation of £50 from the Misses Riddel, a deficit had been turned into a balance in hand. It was suggested that in the different churches the young people should be induced to give subscriptions, no matter how small — a scheme which had already been most successfully adopted in one of our churches. One of the most gratifying proofs of the Mission's usefulness was the success of the elder boys, to whom Miss Drennan had devoted much time and thought. The Band of Mercy, conducted by Miss Duffin, had had a most successful year, and now numbered about forty young children.

After Mr. Mackenzie, the Treasurer, had presented his statement, showing a balance of £33 5s. 1d., the Missionary, Rev. F. Woolley, presented his report. During the year he had paid about 1,200 visits in different parts of the city, especially where want and sickness were frequent, and it was in such cases that the missionary's presence was most necessary and appreciated. The Sunday services, the Wednesday evening meetings, the Sunday School, the Social Guild, the Band of Hope, the Band of Mercy, and the winter entertainments all told of the great hold the Mission was acquiring over the people amongst whom it ministered. The average attendance on Sunday evenings had increased to about 100; on Wednesday evenings to about 50. There were 16 more scholars on the roll than last year, and the number of scholars over 15 years of age was 50. Moreover, he (the missionary) was doing his best to get the boys into skilled trades, and to avoid blind-alley occupations, to which end eight boys were now attending the Municipal Technical Institute.

Mr. Andrews, from the Chair, moved the adoption of the reports. In an admirable Chairman's speech he revealed a close and sympathetic knowledge of those poorer folk among whom the missionary laboured. He urged those present to give to the mission all the help they could, because it served a most useful purpose in forwarding genuine Christian work. So long as they allowed poverty, drunkenness, slums, and other evils to continue unchecked, they failed to deserve the name of Christians. The adoption was seconded by Mr. James Steele.

In supporting, the Rev. E. Savell Hicks, of Dublin, made a capital speech, at the beginning of which he paid a compliment to the splendidly business-like report of Mr. Woolley. The mission was doing an excellent work excellently, and it was for them to help it in every possible way. They must organise their charitable activities if they would get the best results, and he told an amusing anecdote illustrating the error of the overlapping of charities. Nor was it only the poorer folk who were benefited by the mission, for the missionary often found out, in the course of his work, many things which it was well to know for the sake of the general health of society. He himself had discovered in the filthiest and most infested surroundings the manufacture of articles which were sold in leading shops for our consumption. Moreover, missions deserved our support because they did good work in dealing with folk who otherwise would fill our workhouses, prisons, and lunatic asylums. In conclusion, he impressed on them that improvement

in the future would only come from the self-sacrifice of those in comfortable circumstances. They must give their personal help, or, if that be not possible, be liberal in their subscriptions to such worthy causes as the Stanhope Street Mission.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Rev. G. J. Slipper, of Newry (one time missionary at Stanhope Street), proposed, and Mr. M'Kisack seconded, a resolution of confidence in Rev. and Mrs. Woolley.

Rev. E. H. Pickering proposed, and Mr. Robert Dickson seconded, a resolution thanking the voluntary workers at the mission, and especially Dr. Malcolm Brice Smyth, who so generously gave his services to those who were sick.

Rev. Thos. Dunkerley proposed, and Mr. Eustace Gordon seconded, the election of the General and the Ladies' Committees. All these resolutions were carried unanimously, and then, after a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman, Rev. H. J. Rossington closed the proceedings with the Benediction.

Obituary.

MR. JOHN CRAWFORD, LARNE.

Society in Larne and for miles around was deeply thrilled when it became known that John, the only son of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Crawford, of Inver Lodge, Larne, had met his death by accident on Wednesday, February 26th. He had set out to accompany a friend for a little way home, both being mounted on motor cycles. As they descended a gentle declivity within a short distance of the town Mr. Crawford's cycle skidded, got out of control, collided with a returning van, and the unfortunate young man met his end instantaneously. His funeral took place on February 28th, and if numbers may be taken as the measure of regret for him and sympathy with his family, it may be safely said that he and they are held in very high esteem indeed. For seldom, if ever, has such a large concourse of people passed through the streets of Larne. On Sunday, 2nd March, at morning service in the Old Meeting-house with which his ancestors on both sides have been connected since the foundation of the congregation worshipping therein, the service was in keeping with the sad occasion. After the sermon, direct mention was made by his minister of the kindly good nature and warm-heartedness of the deceased. This testimony he fortified by quoting the same opinion expressed by a former master of Larne Grammar School, now a Presbyterian minister. The Dead March in "Saul" was rendered by Mr. Holmes (organist) on the fine organ presented to the congregation by the grand-uncle of the deceased—the late John Crawford—while a deeply moved congregation testified respectful sympathy by standing with heads reverently bowed.

Though his years were comparatively few, Mr. Crawford did good work for the public weal, especially as a member of Larne Urban Council, where his shrewd mother-wit served to overcome many a difficulty, and where also he fought an almost successful battle against crass, stupid bigotry in order to allow the community to hear good sacred music at Sunday concerts when talented artistes were available. He rendered most valuable services to the Larne Flower Show and Home Industries Association, to most of the local athletic organisations, such as golf and football, and was one of the original founders of the Bowling and Tennis Club, and one of the most prominent members thereof till the last.

Reports.

Unity Guild.—The February meeting was held on the 19th ult. in the Central Hall, and took the form of a lantern lecture by Rev. A. O. Ashworth. The subject was "A Cycle Tour in Connemara," and dealt with as it was in breezy style, proved a highly interesting subject. Many of the audience, which was of goodly dimensions, felt that they would like to see for themselves

the scenes so vividly portrayed by the lecturer's pen, also his excellent slides. As, however, Mr. Ashworth was careful to remark that a cycle or motor-car was a sine qua non, they decided that they must perforce be satisfied with what they saw and heard. In addition to the 70 odd slides thrown on the screen, a most interesting collection of photographs was displayed on the walls of the Minor Hall in which the lecture was delivered. Mr. George J. Hill was, as usual, in charge of the lantern, and discharged his duties admirably. The annual meeting for election of officers and arrangement of summer programme will be held in Rosemary Hall, on April 9th.

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Belfast: First Church.—On Wednesday evening, 5th March, at the concert, it was announced that owing to temporary indisposition Mrs. Boas would not be present; this involved a slight re-arrangement of the programme, in which the absent pianist was represented by Miss Ellie Burnett in the pianoforte solos, and by Mr. Cardew-Buckley as accompanist. Miss Burnett played the solos announced for Mrs. Boas. This was something of a feat at such short notice. They included the sixth Hungarian dance of Brahms, the prelude in A and the waltz in G flat of Chopin; and afterwards Godard's chromatic study. The player seemed a little nervous, and was best in the lovely little prelude in A; good techniqne and tone, and allowing for nervousness in the too lavish use of the sustaining pedal, excellent musicianship were noted. Miss M. Jellie played violin solos, including "Reverie" (Vieuxtemps) and Papini's Tarantella, very pleasantly. These two ladies, together with Mr. Cardew-Buckley, played the "Gipsy" rondo of Haydn for violin, 'cello, and piano. Vocal solos were contributed by Miss L. M'Kendry, Miss D. Morton, Mr. J. Waugh, Mr. J. A. Laird, and Mr. J. R. Moore. All proved acceptable to the audience. It was remarkable, however, how the better class among the songs was singled out for marked approval. This was purely on the score of enjoyment, and as enjoyable items Schumann's "Two Grenadiers," sun by Mr. Laird, and "Young Districh" (Henschel), sung by Mr. Moore, brought forth encores, and somewhat warmed up an audience cold up to that point. The encores sung were respectively "Come, Let's Be Merry" (old English, arranged by Lane Wilson), and "Give Me a Horse" (Hungarian air, arranged by Korbay). It is notable that the two songs which won encores tell a story; and the requisites in singing them —clear enunciation, regard for the climaxes, and a telling tone and delivery at the proper point—were in the two performances. Mr. Laird was especially good both in the Schumann and the old English ballad. Two vocal quartets, "My Bonnie Lass" (German), and Hatton's "Gently Fall the Shades of Evening," were sung by the two ladies, Mr. Waugh and Mr. Laird. Mr. Cardew-Buckley played the accompaniments in excellent taste. At an organ recital to be announced later an anthem of Orlando Gibbons' will be a feature sung by a double quartet; though we should prefer a choir, Gibbons is always golden in music for any combination.

On Tuesday evening, March 11th, a well-attended social evening was held in the Central Hall. About 150 persons accepted the invitation of the Social Evenings' Committee, many of whom took part in a word-making competition, which formed the first part of the programme. With "Livingstone" as the key-word, the competitors were asked to make answers to some forty questions arranged on the walls of the hall. Prizes were given, these being won by Mr. E. B. Roche, Miss Campbell, and Miss Maud Martin. Refreshments were provided by a joint-committee of ladies, and then Mrs. Moore and Miss L. Murphy contributed songs, the accompaniments being played by Mr. L. Cardew-Buckley (organist). This brought a very enjoyable evening to a close.

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Belfast: York Street.—A very successful sale of work was held in the hall of the above church on Saturday, March 1st, which was opened by Miss F. M

M'Tear, of Knock. Proceedings commenced at 3 in the afternoon. The opener was introduced by the minister, who referred to Miss M'Tear's great service to our churches and other good causes in Belfast, and to her sympathetic interest in the welfare of York Street Church. Miss M'Tear, before declaring the sale open, gave a delightful address, referring to the renovation that had been completed in the church and hall, and to the strenuous efforts of the congregation, especially of the ladies, on this occasion.

STALLHOLDERS:

Work Stall.—Misses M. Creighton, A. Mahon, M. M'Cafferty, S. Allen, G. Adair, S. May, Mrs. Ervine.

Cake Stall.—Misses M'Kee, M'Bride, M. Welshman, Mrs. Parkes, and Mrs. Shaw.

Refreshment Stall.—Mrs. Roney, Mrs. Neill, Miss Roney, and Miss Simpson.

Games.—Misses E. M'Mullan, M. Neill, L. Neill.

Palmistry.—Miss Morrow.

Shooting Gallery.—Messrs. A. M. Bell, James Orr.

Balloting.—Mr. D. Ervine.

The general secretary was Miss M. Ervine. The proceeds were in aid of the Renovation Fund.

On Wednesday evening, March 5th, a social was given to the children of the Sunday School. A good number of adults were present in addition to the children. After tea various games were played, in which adults and juveniles joined and enjoyed thoroughly. The proceedings were superintended by the Sabbath School officials, and "Auld Lang Syne" terminated what proved to be a most enjoyable evening.

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Cairncastle.—A concert and entertainment was given in the Cairncastle Lecture Hall, on Wednesday, 19th March. Nineteen persons, including a juvenile sailor boy, contributed to the programme—all belonging to the Old Meeting-house with the exception of one of the accompanists. There were songs and recitations, etc., and two sketches—"Paddy's Mistake" and "Old Maids Matched." Messrs. James M'Clelland and Hugh Duffin sang comic songs in costume: the former, who also figured in one of the sketches as a gentleman about to take the most important step in life with due deliberation, and in the other as a constable who unexpectedly took the same step without any deliberation at all, appeared as a singer in a top-hat of antediluvian fashion, in which he earned much applause for describing in song how "he did as his father had done before him," and how "he loved her ever since she was a baby." Mr. Hugh Duffin, who distinguished himself in the title role of the former sketch, as a singer, disguised himself in the garb of a wild (Scottish) Irishman, in which he rendered several songs of Harry Lauder's. Miss Laura Lusk delighted the house by the lifelike manner in which, for the time being, she gave up the ghost on receiving an unexpected offer of marriage from an entirely unlikely quarter, by what transpired to be the principal mistake of "Paddy." Miss Annie Maxwell also won praise for her spirited rendering of the part of a spinster between sixty and seventy, who vaunted herself of the interest she inspired in a "bold, bad old gentleman who looked at her even yet." The Misses Frances and Sophia Robinson, of Sallagh, appearing in sufficiently antiquated dresses, though hardly adequate figures, produced a dialogue between Sairy Gamp and Betsy Prig. Among the musical items of the programme, one of the best appreciated was a song in canon—Sir Philip Sidney's "My true love hath my heart." After the concert there was a dance in the Old School-house, which lasted till a little after 2 o'clock in the morning.

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Holywood.—The Total Abstinence Society held its last meeting for the present season on Tuesday, March 11th. There was a very good attendance. The speaker for the evening was the Rev. J. Glynne Davies, of Banbridge, who gave a most helpful and thoughtful address. The following contributed to the programme:—Miss Mary Greenfield (songs), Mrs. R. L. Kemp (violin solos),

Miss Praeger (readings), Boy Scouts (chorus),. Mrs. Patterson, Mrs. M'Crum, and Mrs. Phelps were the accompanists.

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Newry.—The usual meeting of this Guild was held in the Schoolroom on Tuesday evening, March 11th, and occasion was taken of saying "good-bye" to five members who are leaving for Canada in the course of a few days. After the usual devotional exercises, tea was served to a numerous company of members and friends under the direction of the Misses Thompson, S. Warnock, and L. M'Combe, after which the President, Mr. Walter Scott, took the chair, and outlined the purpose of the meeting. The Rev. G. J. Slipper said how sorry all the members were at the prospect of losing five of the most attentive and earnest members of the Guild and of the Church. They had, however, decided to seek their fortune in Canada, and had responded to the call that was being made by the Dominions across the sea, and we would not grudge their going, but rather wished each and all God speed and every success. Having referred to each member's value to the Church, he concluded an interesting speech with the hope that it would be only au revoir, and that each would be spared to return sometime to the homeland and to the friends, who though parted, would still watch with sincere interest the success which he did not doubt each would attain. He exhorted them to carry into their new life some thoughts of the Newry Unitarian Church and its Guild, and wherever their lot was cast, he trusted the influence gained would serve to mould their lives and lead them forward.

Mr. Robert Roland, who, whilst, apologising for not being a member of the Guild, spoke as a member of the Church and Committee, voiced also the regrets of the congregation at losing such warm friends and workers. He joined heartily in all that had been said, and mingled his hopes with those of all that each friend would find prosperity and the best of good luck in the land of their adoption.

Mr. C. Warnock also spoke, and in the course of his remarks said that the Church could ill afford to lose a single member, but hoped that it was not altogether "good-bye." He had friends already in the Colonies, and from their letters home it always seemed to him that the idea before them was to make a competence and then return home to the mother country. He was glad they were all going to the Colonies, and was sure they would carry their loyalty with them.

Mr. Joseph Mitchell and Mr. Andrew Thompson, the hon. secretary, also addressed the meeting, after which the President, in a few words, asked Mrs. Slipper to make presentations to each of the friends. He said that the Guild Committee had thought that no better gifts could be given to each than a copy of the Holy Bible to carry with them.

Mrs. Slipper then presented Bibles to Mrs. Lockhart, Mr. James Lockhart, Mr. Joseph Little, and Mr. James Thompson. Mrs. M'Clements was unavoidably prevented from being present.

After the presentation, Mrs. Slipper, in a short speech, said she hoped the Bibles would serve to remind them of their Church at home, and that they would diligently read the Word and find in it some message of hope and strength and comfort for all the varied experiences of life's course.

It was stated that Mr. John Thompson was called to Belfast on urgent business, otherwise he would have been present to endorse all that had been said.

The remainder of the evening was devoted to conversation and games, the company at the close joining hands and hearts in singing "Auld Lang Syne" and the National Anthem, after which prayer was offered by the Minister.

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Newtownards.—The Annual Social Re-union was held in No. 1 National Schoo' on Friday evening, 24th January, when a goodly company of members of the congregation and friends assembled to pass a pleasant evening. After tea, which was provided by the young ladies, the Rev. R. Maxwell

King, in a few chosen words, welcomed the company and announced the programme. The children of No. 1 School provided most of the items, which consisted of school action songs and club-swinging. Miss Ena Gordon, a tiny tot, gave two recitations that were greatly enjoyed, and Miss Ena Paden astonished the audience with her clever exhibition of club exercises in presto time. Songs were also sung by Miss Thornbury and Rev. R. M. King. The various accompaniments were played by Mrs. King and Miss Thornbury. A handsome vote of thanks was moved by the Rev. Thomas Munn to the ladies, Mr. Apperson (who kindly lent the phonograph), the children, and the teachers of the school. Mr. Rodgers, in reply, thanking the mover, spoke of the great improvements and repairs that had been made in the building, and thanked the local Committee for the help that had been so cheerfully given, and the Misses Riddell, of Belfast, for their handsome donation of £25, which had helped them to secure the erection of the lavatories, etc. He said it was intended to give a concert in the near future to help to raise funds to pay off the balance of expenses, and he hoped that those present who had enjoyed the work of the children would help them in this final effort. Altogether, the work done cost about £82. When the children had retired, the remainder of the evening was spent in dancing, which also was greatly appreciated. The proceedings concluded with the singing of the National Anthem and "Auld Lang Syne."

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Templepatrick. — The congregation here held its Annual Meeting on Wednesday evening, 5th February, in the Roughfort School-room. Proceedings commenced at 7-30 o'clock, when the ladies of the congregation provided at their own charge and dispensed a most excellent tea. Subsequently, the minister (Rev. A. Turner) was moved to the Chair, and Mr. John Moore, the Secretary, was called upon to set forth a statement of the accounts for the year ending 31st December last. In the course of a speech explanatory of the statement, Mr. Moore pointed out that the congregation had suffered recently by reason of deaths and removals, and showed how necessary it was that the vacant places should be filled by the young people coming forward. The minister reviewed the work of the past year, and emphasised the need for religious observance. A small sub-committee, consisting of Messrs. J. Moore, R. Thompson, and S. Ritchie, was appointed to revise the stipend list and to invite younger people to come forward and qualify as full members of the Church in their own right. Having disposed of the business part of the programme, the Chairman proceeded to indicate that one reason why they held their meeting that night was that they, as a congregation, might assemble to say good-bye to a young member of their Church who would sail on the following Saturday to seek his fortunes away off in Canada. Mr. Harry Barnett, whom they all knew well, had been the most consistent attender at Sunday School, and had just commenced to take an active part in the work of the Church. His presence and his help would be greatly missed, his emigration was a distinct loss to their Church, and all he, the minister, could do, would be to look to those left behind to display an equal allegiance to their Church and to serve it as faithfully and well as their young friend who was now leaving them. On behalf of the congregation, the minister then presented Mr. Harry Barnett with a number of gifts, which had been willingly subscribed for by the members of the Church, and which fitly testified to the esteem in which the recipient had been held by his fellow-worshippers and his Sunday School friends. Other speakers testified to the regard in which Mr. Barnett had been held, and all joined in wishing him every success in the enterprise on which he was about to set out. Mr. Barnett suitably acknowledged the gifts and all kind sentiments. It had been proposed to spend the remainder of the evening in a social way, but the sudden and unexpected death of a member of our Church, Mr. Robert Barnett, of Kil-

greel, an uncle of our guest of the evening, quite put such thoughts out of mind, and the meeting was brought to a close by the pronouncement of the benediction.

On the following Friday evening the scholars of the day and Sunday Schools were entertained to tea and games. A very pleasant evening was spent, and was thoroughly enjoyed by all the children. Prizes were presented to the scholars of the Sunday School for the past two years. Games and selections on the gramophone by Miss Bessie Barnett entertained the children till about 9 o'clock, when they were despatched to their various homes.

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